

Property Writes

PROPERTY TAX DIVISION NEWS LETTER DECEMBER 2003

INSIDE

Message from the Director.....	2
Certified Tax Rates	2
Real Property	3
Rule Changes	5
GIS/Nomenclature	6
Education	7



Property Tax Division
Utah State Tax Commission

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(801) 297-3600

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

- Denny Lytle

I think this time of year gives us a chance to look back at where we have been and look forward to what is to come. During this past summer I was testifying before the Revenue and Taxation Committee and we were taking some difficult questions about the division's over-site of county officials. I stated that I have been in this business for almost twenty years and that the county officials now in place are the most competent, best educated and most dedicated group that I have seen. I believe what I said to the Revenue and Taxation Committee. While the work we do can sometimes be very challenging, the one thing I know I can count on is the county officials. Every day I see professionalism and hard work exhibited by the county officials. I appreciate the opportunity to work with you.

At this season I would like to thank you and your staff for the opportunity we have had to work at your side this last year. I hope that we have been helpful and contributed to your success. We will continue to face the many challenges of public service; I know that if we maintain our positive working relationships, we can do the right things for the people of Utah.

Sincere Regards And Best Wishes For 2003.



TAX RATES AND STATISTICS

- Blaine Smith

For a number of years we have published the Annual Statistical Report that provides assessment and tax collection data. The format has changed somewhat over the years; we have eliminated some of the charts and supporting data and added others. The biggest recent change is that we now place the report on our web site www.propertytax.utah.gov. Because of cost we have eliminated the hard copy publishing of the report.

In order to make this report more meaningful, we are requesting that if you use this data and have not visited our web version that you do so at your earliest convenience. Over the next few months we are going to poll and talk to as many users of the data that we can contact. We are looking for input concerning the content of the current report, information that is no longer useful, new data breakouts and presentation considerations. We would like to make this document useful to a very wide range of users. If you have suggestions please contact one of the following.

Blaine Smith	(801) 297-3688
LaMar Sayer	(801) 297-3617
Terri Chidester	(801) 297-3612
Colleen Southwick	(801) 297 3601

NEW EMPLOYEE – CHAD FRANCOM

- Craig Jolley

We would like to introduce a new employee, Chad Francom. Chad fills a newly created Information Analyst position in the division. He will maintain our new sale ratio database and our “RatioLink” Application. Chad comes to us from the private sector. He is a certified Oracle Database Administrator and has extensive experience programming in Microsoft Access and Visual Basic.

Those of you who use RatioLink will get to know him better as he provides you with technical assistance. We are happy to have Chad on board with us!

RATIOLINK

RatioLink is the new computer solution for the annual Assessment/Sales Ratio Study. We first unveiled the test version a year ago at Assessors’ School under the name “SR2003.” Along with the new name comes a great deal of new power and utility.

What is RatioLink?



RatioLink is a database application with a fourfold mission. First, it performs the entire process for collecting sale data. This includes importing deeds, mailing transfer surveys, entering survey returns and storing all sale data in a central location.

Second, it provides a fast and easy way to collect assessments and clean the sales.

Its many tools include 1) combined views of deed, assessment and survey data on a single page, 2) automatically displayed analyses and calculations such as dollars per square foot and cash equivalency and 3) several pre-designed queries that search the entire database for data errors and conflicts.

Third, it replaces the sales ratio spreadsheet for stratifying and calculating ratio statistics.

No more cutting and pasting in an Excel or QuattroPro spreadsheet! No more formulas being accidentally moved!

Stratifications and calculations are performed instantaneously. In addition, data is easily exported to NCSS or other applications.

Fourth, it gives county representatives and counties instantaneous access to their sale data through an on-line synchronization process. No more waiting.

RatioLink is undergoing continuing enhancements. There are still a few bugs to work out, but it has reached a state of readiness for use. It is currently being used by our county representatives. In addition, we have installed it in Weber and Cache counties and they are using it to clean and analyze their sale data. Plans are being made to install it in Juab, Utah, Carbon and Duchesne counties.

If you would like more information or a demonstration, or if you have a suggestion to improve the program, please call Craig Jolley at 801-297-3621 or Chad Francom at 801-297-3624.



RECENT PROPERTY TAX RULE CHANGES

- Lee Brennan

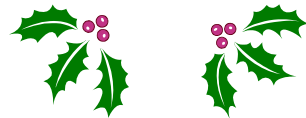
Several property tax rules are scheduled for a public rule meeting at the Tax Commission, December 18 at 8:30 a.m. The full text of these Rules can be found at www.tax.utah.gov/research/rules.html

- **R884-24P-53 – Valuation Guides for Valuation of Land Subject to the Farmland Assessment Act (Greenbelt).** This is the annual update of agricultural use-values to be applied by county assessors to land qualifying under the Farmland Assessment Act.
- **R884-24P-67 – Information Required for Valuation of Low-Income Housing.** This rule indicates the information that the Utah Housing Corporation and low-income housing property owners must provide in order for the county assessor to property value the low-income housing property.
- **R884-24P-24 – Adjustments to Formula Used to Calculate the Certified Tax Rate.** This rule indicates that the estimated equalization adjustment, used to adjust taxable value, shall include equalization adjustments made to centrally assessed and locally assessed real and personal property.
- **R884-24P-33 – Personal Property Valuation Guides and Schedules.** This is the annual update of the personal property guides and schedules used to value business personal property

**REVIEW OF EXISTING RULE
884P-24P-66
EXTENSION OF THE COUNTY BOARD OF EQUALIZATION**

Remember, you can accept late appeals through the end of March if any of the following circumstances exist:

- During the regular filing period, the property owner was incapable of filing an appeal as the result of a medical emergency of the property owner or immediate family member, and no co-owner was capable of filing the appeal.
- During the regular filing period, the property owner died, and no co-owner was capable of filing the appeal.
- The county did not comply with the notification period.
- A factual error is discovered. A factual error means an error that is objectively verifiable without the exercise of judgment or opinion. A factual error would include a mistake in the description, size, ownership, use, double assessment, or an error in the classification of the property for purposes of the residential exemption.



GIS – NOMENCLATURE
-Terri Chidester

Happy holidays – it's that time of the year to start checking your list, to find out who's been naughty or nice, or in our case, who has filed or not filed their annexations. In past years I have sent you a listing of everything that has been processed in our office. This year we have set up a site on the property tax web page

(<http://www.propertytax.utah.gov/nomenclature/annexations.html>) for you to review. By having this, I will be able to keep the list updated. Please remember to review this list at the end of December for the most current update. I will try to update this list monthly starting in January, so please remember to check. Also please let your staffs working with annexations know about this site.

As you may know, Finch Bingham retired last June. He is dearly missed. Any correspondence relating to annexations or boundary changes, please send to:

Terri Chidester
Utah State Tax Commission
Property tax division
(801) 297-3612

EDUCATION

- Colleen Southwick

January marks the start of the education series – beginning with a one-day USPAP course to be held in sunny St. George and followed by Course A at the Salt Lake County complex. For those looking for the dates, time and place of 2004 courses check out our web site at

www.propertytax.utah.gov

WSATA will be held January 25-30, 2004 in Logan, Utah. Course 100 – The Principles of Unitary Appraisal offers comprehensive treatment of unitary appraisal principles for beginning appraisers. The Advanced Course 101 topics will include: Current State of the Electric Power Industry, Telecommunications Industry, Current Issues with Intangible Assets an FAS 142 & 144, Practical Application of FAS 142 & 144, Valuation of Railroads, Preparation for Trial and Negotiation and Persuasion. For those interested in attending, contact Charles Peterson at 297-3648 for a registration form.



Happy Holidays!